



Provider Update: Surveillance and Prevention of Work-Related Burns

June 2002

Safety & Health
Assessment & Research
for Prevention – **SHARP**

Washington State
Department of Labor and
Industries

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For questions about case
reporting, our program, or
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Dear Health Care Provider,

This update of SHARP's work-related burns surveillance and prevention program provides brief results of an analysis of cases collected from September 2000 through May 2002.

We at SHARP wanted to thank you once again for participating in this program! Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions to make our program stronger.

Sincerely,
Christy Curwick, MPH
Work-Related Burns Surveillance Program Coordinator

Data Highlights

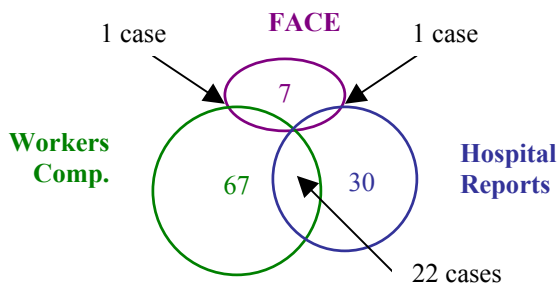
- ✓ 104 Washington workers received severe burn injuries on the job between September 2000 and May 2002.
- ✓ 9 of those workers were fatally injured.
- ✓ 30% of our cases could not have been obtained without hospital reporting.
- ✓ 25% of work-related burn injuries requiring hospitalization occurred in the special trade construction industry.



Analysis of Burn Injuries

From September 2000 through May 2002, we received 128 work-related hospitalized burn reports for 104 individuals. Figure 1 illustrates the number of cases received by each reporting source.

Figure 1: Case Reports by Source



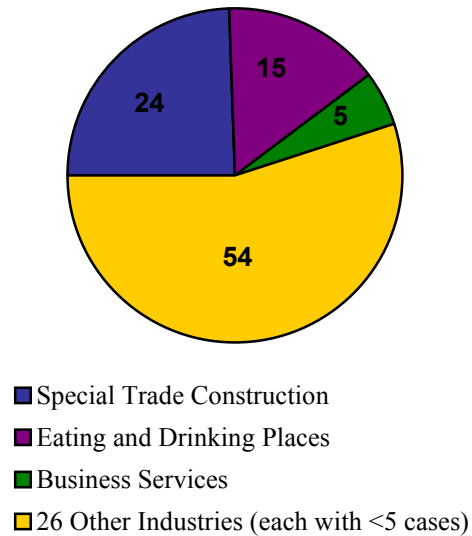
There were nine fatalities reported during this period. The majority of injured workers were male (89%) and the average age was 35 years. Most burns were described as thermal (80%), with chemical and electrical burns making up 9% and 8%, respectively. Common sources identified were flame/fire (32%), water (12%), steam (6%), and asphalt/road oil (6%).

Of those that could be classified according to severity (63 cases), 45% had $\leq 10\%$ total body surface area (TBSA) burns. Two workers were identified with burns of more than 60% TBSA. About half of the workers had burns to multiple body parts; followed by burns to the upper extremity (24%), lower extremity (14%), and head/face (8%).

Industry information was available for 98 workers. Figure 2 shows the industry distribution, identified by 2-digit

Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes.

Figure 2: Hospitalized Burns by 2-Digit SIC



As illustrated above, nearly 25% of these injuries occurred in the Special Trade Construction Industry, with the majority of the cases occurring in the following industry sectors: Roofing, Siding and Sheetmetal (7 cases); Plumbing, Heating, and Air Conditioning (5 cases); and Electrical Work (5 cases).

HAZARD ALERT

In collaboration with Washington's Fatality Assessment and Control Evaluation (FACE) program, we have identified a serious hazard in the Special Trade Construction Industry – the use of flammable solvents near ignition sources in enclosed spaces. This finding resulted in a site visit and the information gathered is currently being used to publish an agency hazard alert. The hazard alert will be disseminated to contractors throughout the state.